



NEWS

Wisconsin Department of Transportation



Northeast Regional Office, 944 Vanderperren Way, Green Bay, WI 54304-5344 Phone: 920/492-5643 FAX: 920/492-5640 www.dot.wisconsin.gov

April 21, 2011

For more information, contact:

Kris Schuller, US 41 Project communication manager

Kris.Schuller@dot.wi.gov, (920) 492-4109

WisDOT announces preferred alternative for US 41 Project Memorial Drive to County M (Lineville Road)

Federal approval anticipated by fall 2011

(Green Bay) The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) Northeast Region Office in Green Bay is announcing that Alternative E is its preferred alternative for the Memorial Drive to County M (Lineville Road) project. The decision to select Alternative E as WisDOT's preferred alternative is based on several factors, including public input at the March 2 public hearing and during the public comment period that ended March 28.

"Alternative E provides the best solution for addressing long-term mobility needs and safety concerns for this 3.5 mile segment of the US 41 corridor," says Northeast Region Acting Director Will Dorsey. "We are now looking for concurrence from the participating state and federal resource agencies."

WisDOT presented two build alternatives in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and at a March 2 public hearing. Alternatives D and E share the following key elements: adding capacity to the US 41 mainline, reconstructing County M (Lineville Road) and Velp Avenue interchanges and reconstructing several bridges that currently cross the US 41 mainline. The primary difference between Alternatives D and E is how improvements to the I-43 interchange are designed.

Alternative D adds mainline capacity between Velp Avenue and I-43 interchanges using auxiliary lanes or a collector-distributor (CD) system. However, Alternative D maintains the two existing loop ramps. Alternative E adds capacity to the US 41 mainline, but completely rebuilds the I-43 interchange, including new directional ramps between the two freeways in all directions, replacing the loop ramps. Reconfiguring the interchange ramps improves driver safety, but also eliminates access between I-43 and Velp Avenue via US 41. Local traffic would need to use an alternative interchange to access I-43.

-more-

US 41 Project

Page 2

Feedback received at the hearing and during the 45-day public comment period expressed support for both alternatives. Comments from several residents and businesses in Howard expressed concern over eliminating access between I-43 and Velp Avenue via US 41 because it increases travel time between I-43 and Velp Avenue and reduces accessibility to businesses on Velp Avenue from I-43. WisDOT notes those concerns, but selects Alternative E primarily because it is safer.

- Alternative E eliminates two loop ramps from the I-43/US 41 interchange. At a 2010 meeting with emergency service providers, the majority supported Alternative E because of the history of crashes on the existing loop ramps.
- US 41 is a backbone highway in the WisDOT's Connections 2030 plan and a National Highway System (NHS) route. I-43 is an existing interstate highway and US 41 has been identified for possible future conversion to an interstate highway. Therefore, both of these roadways are significant routes in the state transportation network. Alternative E includes all 60-70 mph ramps, which dramatically improve traffic flow.
- Crash rates within the project limits are among the highest in the Brown County US 41 corridor. The loop ramps have been identified through a recent Road Safety Audit (RSA) as a safety concern, especially for large trucks using the I-43 interchange. Those loop ramps accommodate movements at a speed of just 30 mph.

WisDOT's selection of Alternative E as its preferred alternative will be documented in the Final EIS. The final EIS will be available for public and agency review after it is approved by the Federal Highway Administration. Approval is anticipated in late summer 2011. The final EIS will fully document the input received during the recently concluded draft EIS comment period and identify commitments needed to mitigate impacts through construction. After reviewing comments on the final EIS, the Federal Highway Administration will issue a Record of Decision, which is its final approval of the project. The Record of Decision is expected by fall 2011. Construction would occur from 2012 through 2017.

For additional information, interested persons may contact the WisDOT project manager, Danielle Block at (920) 492-2212 or Danielle.Block@dot.wi.gov.

###

[Brown - all]

NOTE: News releases can be viewed on the Web at: www.US41wisconsin.gov and www.dot.wisconsin.gov/news/index.htm.